



Satellite image with enhanced low cloud-top temperatures (degrees C) for 7:15 a.m. EDT (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights - Thursday - October 17, 2002

- ***In the West***, a developing storm system is producing beneficial showers from *southern California into Arizona*, but warm, dry weather prevails elsewhere *west of the Rockies*. Very dry conditions persist in the *Northwest*, where dryland winter wheat will soon need rain to sustain normal growth.
- ***On the Plains***, very cool weather lingers across the *eastern Dakotas*, where damp conditions are further slowing summer crop harvesting. In contrast, warm, breezy weather is returning to the *High Plains*, promoting winter wheat emergence but reducing soil moisture for crop development.
- ***In the Corn Belt***, cool, showery conditions are causing additional fieldwork delays in the *upper Midwest*, but boosting topsoil moisture for emerging winter wheat in the *Ohio Valley* and *lower Great Lakes region*.
- ***In the South***, dry weather in the *Delta* is promoting as much soybean, rice, and cotton harvesting as soggy field conditions will allow. Meanwhile in the *Southeast*, cool, dry weather favors a return to fieldwork, following recent, drought-easing rainfall.

Outlook: A series of weak cold fronts will maintain below-normal temperatures and periods of light rain and snow in the *Midwest* and *Northeast*, while high pressure will provide dry conditions to the *Southeast* and *southern Mid-Atlantic States*. Dry, warm weather will prevail from the *central and northern High Plains* westward to the *Pacific Coast*, while a slow-moving disturbance will bring showers to the *Four Corners Region*, *southern Plains*, reaching the *lower Mississippi Valley* by week's end. The NWS 6-10 day outlook for October 22-26 calls for below-normal temperatures *east of the Rockies*, but warmer-than-normal weather in the *Northwest*. Above-normal precipitation is forecast for the *southern Rockies and southern Plains eastward to the southern Atlantic States*, while drier-than-normal conditions are expected across roughly the *northern one-half of the U.S.*

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